



December 23, 2021

Dear Interested Party;

On November 19, 2021, the Department of Environmental Quality (department) initiated rulemaking on proposed amendments to Administrative Rules of Montana 17.30.1304 and a proposed rule (New Rule I) pertaining to implementation of narrative standards for nutrients in Montana surface waters. Nutrients, in this context, refers to total phosphorus and total nitrogen concentrations in state surface waters.

In April 2021 the Montana legislature adopted Senate Bill 358 (now 75-5-321, MCA) which directs the department to adopt rules related to narrative nutrient standards by March 1, 2022. The law describes a process for implementing narrative nutrient standards in Montana Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (MPDES) permits and requires that these be developed in consultation with the advisory nutrient work group. The law includes the requirement to develop an adaptive management program which provides for an incremental, watershed approach for protecting and maintaining water quality.

On February 8, 2022, at 2:00 p.m., a public hearing will be held in room 111 of the Metcalf Building, 1520 East Sixth Avenue, Helena, Montana, to consider the proposed amendments and New Rule I. You may also join the meeting virtually via Zoom. A copy of the Montana Administrative Register (MAR) notice of proposed rulemaking has been enclosed for your consideration. More information is available on the department's website, including instruction on how to attend remotely, at <https://deq.mt.gov/water/Programs/sw#accordion2-collapse2>. The department will make reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities who wish to participate in this rulemaking process or need an alternative accessible format of this notice (see the enclosed MAR notice for details).

You are invited to submit data, views, or arguments, either orally or in writing, at the hearing. Written data, views, or arguments may also be submitted to Loryn Johnson, Paralegal, Department of Environmental Quality, P.O. Box 200901, Helena, Montana 59620-0901; faxed to (406) 444-4386; or e-mailed to loryn.johnson2@mt.gov no later than 5:00 p.m. on February 8, 2022. To be guaranteed consideration, mailed comments must be postmarked on or before that date.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Myla Kelly".

Myla Kelly
Section Supervisor
Water Quality Standards & Modeling Section

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rainie DeVaney".

Rainie DeVaney
Section Supervisor
Surface Water Discharge Permitting Section
Supervisor